

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1939

BY

R. DE VEIL KING, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

TAUNTON:

H. G. MOUNTER AND CO., LTD.,
PRINTERS TO HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.



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PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF, 1939.

Medical Officer of Health and Medical Superintendent of the Taunton Joint Isolation Hospital and Somerset County Council Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Taunton:

R. DE V. KING, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Telephone: Taunton 3389.

Sanitary Inspector:

R. H. GARDNER, C.R.S.I. (appt. March, 1911)

Additional Sanitary Inspector:

E. G. PAYNE, C.R.S.I. (appt. Feb., 1936)

Matron, Isolation Hospital and Tuberculosis Sanatorium:

MISS M. MILNER, S.R.N.

Address: Taunton Isolation Hospital,

_

Cheddon Road.

Telephone: Taunton 2396.

Clerk to the Council:

P. O. Cowlishaw, Mary Street House, Taunton.

Telephone: Taunton 2285.

Statistics for the Year 1939.

Area (in acres) 70,675
*Estimate of Resident Population, Mid-year 1939 16,740/17,380
Census Population, 1931 17,101
No. of inhabited houses according to the Rate Books
on December 31st, 1939 4,858
Rateable value—1st April, 1939 £85,065
Sum represented by a Penny Rate, 31st March, 1939 £357
Extracts from the Vital Statistics of the Year.
Live Births:—
Total M. F.
Legitimate 189 104 85 Birth Rate per
Illegitimate 9 5 4 1,000 of the esti-
198 109 89 mated resident population 11.8
population 11.0
Still Births—Total 8.
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births 38.8
Deaths—Total 205.
Death rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population 11.7
Deaths from Puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List):—
Deaths. Rates per 1,000 births.
No. 29. Puerperal Sepsis Nil. Nil.
No. 30. Other Puerperal causes Nil. Nil.
Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—
Legitimate 11, Illegitimate 5:—Total Infant Deaths 16
All Infants per 1,000 live births 80.8
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births 57.6
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births 555.5
* Two estimates of Resident Population are given this year by the Registrar-

^{*} Two estimates of Resident Population are given this year by the Registrar-General, viz.:—(a) 16,740 for the calculation of Birth rates, and

(b) 17,380 for the calculation of Death rates or incidence of notifiable diseases.

Deaths		Cancer (all ages)	• • •	• • •	38
3 7	,,		• • •	• • •	
,,	,,	Whooping Cough (all ages)	• • •	• • •	-
	,,	Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)		• • •	2

The rates for the area may be compared with the rates for England and Wales in the following table; the local crude death rate has been multiplied by the factor 0.79 supplied by the Registrar-General to make this rate strictly comparable with that of England and Wales:—

	England & Wales.	Taunton R.D.
Live birth rate per 1,000 population Still birth rate ,, ,, ,, Death rate ,, ,, ,, Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	15.0 0.59 12.1 50.0	11.8 0.47 9.2 80.8
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live birt	hs:—	
(a) Puerperal Sepsis (b) Other causes	$0.74 \\ 2.08$	-
Total	2.82	

Infant Mortality during 1939.

The following table gives the causes and ages at death of the infants who died under one year of age:—

Cause of Death.	Under 1 week.	1 to 2 weeks.	2 to 3 weeks.	3 to 4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	1 to 3 months	3 to 6 months.	6 to 9 months.	9 to 12 months.	Total under 1 year.
Prematurity Congenital Debility and Malformation Enteritis Meningitis Broncho-Pneumonia	3 2	2 1 —			5 3 — 1	3 2 —	1 —			5 7 2 1 1
Totals	5	3		1	9	5	1	1		16

Causes of Death	durin	g 1953		-	
Cause of Death			M.	F.	Total
l causes	• • •	• • •	99	106	205
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	• • •				
Measles	• • •	• • •			
Scarlet Fever		• • •			
Whooping Cough	• • •	• • •			
Diphtheria	• • •	• • •			
Influenza	• • •	• • •	4	5	9
Encephalitis Lethargica	• • •	• • •	1		1
Cerebro Spinal Fever		• • •			—
Tuberculosis of Respiratory S	System	n	3	3	6
Other Tuberculous disease	• • •	• • •			
Syphilis	• • •	• • •	1		-
General Paralysis of the Ins	ane,				
tabes dorsalis					
Cancer, malignant disease	• • •	• • •	19	19	38
Diabetes	• • •	• • •	1	1	2
Cerebral Hæmorrhage, etc.			4	8	12
Heart Disease		• • •	22	39	61
Aneurysm	• • •		2	1	3
Other Circulatory Diseases		• • •	6	2	8
Bronchitis	• • •	• • •	2		2
Pneumonia (all forms)		• • •	3	1	4
Other Respiratory Diseases			4		4
Peptic Ulcer	• • •	• • •	1		1
Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	• • •	• • •		2	2
Appendicitis					
Cirrhosis of Liver			. 1		1
Other Diseases of the Liver,				2	$\frac{1}{2}$
Other Digestive Diseases	***	• • •	1		1
Acute and Chronic Nephritis			3	1	4
7	• • •	• • •			
Other Puerperal Diseases	• • •				
Congenital Debility, Premate					
etc		ıı uıı,	5	6	11
	• • •	• • •	1	5	
Senility	• • •	• • •			6
Suicide	• • •	• • •	1	1	$\frac{2}{4}$
Other violence	• • •	• • • < 0	3	1	4
	• • •	• • •	10	8	18
Causes ill-defined or unknow		• • •			
Diarrhœa, 2 years and over	• • •	• • •	1	1	2

Total

99 106 205

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

The Hospitals, Clinics, Treatment Centres and Ambulance facilities are fully described in the Report for 1938. No changes in these have occurred since then.

This area is one of the Reception Districts for Evacuees under the Government Evacuation Scheme. A certain number of the Evacuees were found on arrival and afterwards to be suffering from contagious diseases such as scabies, Impetigo and verminous conditions. The milder cases were treated in their billets but the severer cases were accommodated either at the Sick-Bay in Wellington Urban District (sanctioned for this purpose and equipped for 13 beds by the Ministry of Health) or accommodation was found for them at Taunton Isolation Hospital or the Public Assistance Institutions in Taunton and Wellington. There has been no noticeable increase in the amount of infectious diseases in the district as the result of the Government Evacuation Scheme.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply. Full particulars were given in the report for 1938 regarding the water supply of the District. No new schemes have been proposed during the year. The public supplies were examined quarterly for bacteriological purity and they were in all cases satisfactory. In addition, 35 samples were taken from 27 private supplies of which 13 only were satisfactory. Of the unsatisfactory waters, 5 wells were closed and a piped supply laid on, and the remainder were made fit after attention by cleansing and chlorination and attention to drainage.

Drainage and Sewerage. The scheme for re-sewering the village portion of Bishops Lydeard and the construction of new sewage disposal works were practically completed by the end of the year. New works or improvements to existing works in the parishes of Corfe, Creech St. Michael, Ruishton, Norton Fitzwarren, Trull, Pitminster and West Bagborough are required but were not considered on account of the present emergency.

Rivers and Streams and Closet Accommodation. There is nothing new or of importance to report on these matters for the year under review.

Public Cleansing. The collection and disposal of unburnable household refuse now operates in 16 out of the 32 parishes, and the amount collected was 304 lorry loads. Collection is undertaken in the following parishes:—Ash Priors, Bishops Lydeard, Corfe, Creech St. Michael, Halse, Kingston, Pitminster, Ruishton, West Bagborough, Bishops Hull, Combe Florey, Norton Fitzwarren, Thornfalcon, Staplegrove, Stoke St. Mary and West Monkton.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following tabular statement is furnished by the Sanitary Inspectors:—

Number and nature of inspections during the year	::
* · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	549
	282
Bakehouses	32
Other premises where food is prepared or	
sold	18
	253
Places where animals are kept (other than	
Cowsheds)	8
Infectious Disease enquiries and disinfec-	
tions, etc	29
Factories, Workshops and Workplaces	39
Miscellaneous	124
Number of Notices served during the year:-	
	227
Statutory Notices	
Result of service of Notices:—	
Total Notices complied with	176
Notices standing over at the end of 1939	51

Shops and Offices. Under the provisions of Sec. 13 (3) of the Shops Act, 1934, relating to ventilation, temperature and sanitary conveniences of shops, 10 visits have been made.

Camping Sites. The local authority have not found it necessary to issue any licences in respect of these, as advertised camping sites appear to fall within Section 269 (2) of the Public Health Act, 1936.

Smoke Abatement. There has been no necessity to take action under Section 101 of the Public Health Act, 1936, as there have been no complaints.

Swimming Baths and Pools. There are not any in the area.

Eradication of Bed=bugs. No Council or other houses have been found to be infested with bed-bugs.

Schools. The sanitary conditions and water supply of the schools in the area are satisfactory. Owing to the number of school-age evacuees in the area, accommodation has been found for them in various village halls, institutes and clubs.

Offensive Trades. There are no Offensive Trades in the district within the meaning of Section 107 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

HOUSING.

The particulars given below are in the form required annually by the Minister of Health:—

- I. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:—
 - (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 129
 - (b) Number of inspections made for this purpose 349
 - (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under Sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932 61
 - (b) Number of inspections made for this purpose 61
 - (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation

61	(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding Sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation
	I. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:—
41	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local Authority or their Officers
	II. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:— A. Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
	(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—
	(a) By owners (b) By local Authority in default of Owners
	B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-
-	(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—
	(a) By Owners (b) By local Authority in default of Owners
	C. Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:—
1	 (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished
6	in pursuance of Demolition Orders
	D. Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:— (1) Number of separate tenements or under
	(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made

(2) 1	Number of sepa	rate tenemer	its or under-	
	ground rooms in Orders were de			
	or room having			
IV. Housing Act				
•	(1) Number o			
` `	crowded at	the end of t	he year	
	2) Number of		_	
	(3) Number of			
	Number of new reported during			1
	(1) Number of			~
(*)		ring the year		1
	(2) Number o			
(3)		•••		5
	Particulars of dwelling-houses	~		
	crowded after t			
	taken steps for			
	erowding		• • •	
	Any other par		*	
	overcrowding co Medical Officer	-		
b .	t desirable to			
	ew houses erec		he Year:—	
	Local Authority	~		
	ith State Assist			
	(a) Rehousing	•		***************************************
	(b) Overcrowd	<u> </u>	• • •	
\mathbf{W}	(c) Other ithout State A	ggigtanca	•••	
	ther bodies or		• • • • •	
• /	(a) With State	-	• • •	
	(b) Without S	tate Assistar	ice	73
The position	with regard to	the number	of dwelling-he	ouses
built or in course of 1938, is as follows		he Council u _l	to December	31st,
Built un	der 1919 Act	• • •	58	
",	•	•••	146	
23 3.	, 1936 ,,	• • •	204	
		Total	408	

The following table shows the Parishes in which the Council have erected houses under the various Acts:—

Parish.	Address.		Numb Hou	
Bishops Hull do.	00/7F M 1 - C 11 -	• • •	38 16 —	54
Bishops Lydeard . do. do. do.	1/10 Pound Lane 1/6 Mill Lane Cottages	• • •	8 10 6 30	54
Cheddon Fitzpaine .	· 1/8 School Cottages	• • •		8
Churchstanton . do	1/4 Stapley Cottages 1/4 Church Road Cottages	• • •	4 4	8
1.	1/6 Charlton Lane Cottages 1/4 Cheads Cottages	• • •	8 6 4 16	34
Curland	1/2 Castle View	• • •		2
Hatch Beauchamp .	1/4 Palmers Green Cottages	• • •		4
Kingston do. do. do. do.	· 1/8 Greenway Terrace	• • •	6 2 8 4 10	30
Lydeard St. Lawrence	. 1/4 Nethercott Road	•••		4
Do. Do. Do.	1/6 Oxen Lane 1/4 Backham Cottages 1/10 Croft Cottages 1/8 Lillesdon Terrace 1/8 Cricket Cottages	• • •	6 4 10 8 8	36
Norton Fitzwarren . do. do. do. do. do.	. 1/24 Rectory Road Cottages 1/10 Station Road Cottages 1/4 Manleys Cottages	• • • •	4 24 10 4 4	46

Parish.		${ m Address.}$		Number of Houses.
Pitminster	•••	1/8 Littleham Cottages	• • •	8
Ruishton do. do. do.	• • •	1/5 Ruishton Lane Cottages 1/3 Lipe Lane Cottages 1/4 Slades Cottages 1/12 Steart Cottages	•••	5 3 4 12 — 24
Staplegrove	• • •	1/6 Hillhead Cottages	• • •	6
Stoke St. Gregory Do. Do.	• • •	1/16 Willey Road 1/8 Stathe Cottages 1/10 Woodhill Terrace	•••	16 8 10 — 34
Stoke St. Mary	•••	1/4 Homefield Cottages	• • •	4
Thornfalcon	• • •	1/4 Glebe Cottages	•••	4
Trull	• • •	1 and 2 Horts Cottages	• • •	2
West Bagborough do.	•••	1/10 Vale View Cottages 1/4 Hill View Cottages 1/4 South View Cottages	• • •	10 4 4 — 18
West Monkton do. do. do.	•••	1/4 Titley Cottages 1/4 Brittons Ash Cottages 1/6 Hyde Lane Cottages 1/14 School Road Cottages	• • •	4 4 6 14 — 28
		TOTAL	•••	408

Of this number 204 were to replace Houses dealt with by Slum Clearance.

Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1938. The decision of the Council to erect 28 houses under the above Act has been postponed on account of the present emergency. They were to be built in the following parishes:—Bishops Hull 8, Bishops Lydeard 5, Combe Florey 1, Pitminster 2, North Curry 3, Stoke St. Gregory 4, Thornfalcon 2, Trull 3.

Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, 1926/1935. Owing to the present emergency, the appropriate Committee of the County Council are prepared to consider applications for grants to recondition Cottages under the above Acts, only under certain conditions:—

- (1) That the proposed works will constitute an increase in new accommodation for agricultural workers.
- (2) That there is a shortage of such accommodation in the district.
 - (3) Before a decision can be given to any application submitted to the County Council, the said Council are required to submit particulars of the proposed works to the Minister of Health, who will consult the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries in regard to the application from the point of view of the need for additional accommodation in the national interests of agriculture.

Government Evacuation Scheme.

During September, 1939, the following persons were billeted in the district (shown in tabular form) and the number remaining at the end of 1939:—

	Billeted September, 1939.	Returned to London.	Remaining on Dec. 31st, 1939.
Unaccompanied Children Accompanied Children	1,025 715	310 629	715 86
Mothers, Helpers and Teachers	560	460	100
Totals	2,300	1,399	901

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply.—The usual routine work connected with safeguarding the milk supply has been carried out. This includes the inspection of farms and dairies, the examination of samples for bacterial content and for tubercle bacilli, the administration of the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926, and the Milk (Special Designations) Orders, 1936 and 1938. No legal action was necessary during the year.

Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.—The registers which have to be kept under this Order show as follows:—

Number of Producers on the Register ... 349

Number of Distributors on the Register divided as follows:—

- (a) Distributors only 12
- (b) Distributors who are also Producers ... 27

For the purposes of the veterinary inspection of cattle, lists of retail and wholesale producers are sent to the County Medical Officer of Health. During the year, 375 inspections were made to milk producing premises, and the following summary shows the work done:—

No. of Registered Premises (347 in 1938)	• • •	349
No. of Inspections to these	• • •	253
No. of new sheds and floors, etc., obtained	• • •	13
No. of new sterilising and cooling plants obtain	ned	5
No. of samples of milk taken		142

Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936 and 1938.—Under this Order, the following licences are in force in the District and issued by the County Council:—

Licences:	Tuberculin	Tested pro	ducers	• • •	 13
	Accredited	producers	• • •		 21

In addition, there is one Supplementary Licence issued by the Local Authority for the sale of Pasteurised Milk in the District but which is not porduced therein.

The analytical results of the 142 samples of milk taken and examined by the County Bacteriologist are as follows:—

Designation.	No. of Samples taken.	Samples satisfac-		Percentage unsatis- factory.
Tuberculin Tested Accredited Examined for tubercle bacilli	61 66 15	50 40 15	11 26 0	18.03 39.4 0
	142	105	37	26.05

These results are far from good.

Tuberculosis Order, 1925.—Eight cows had to be slaughtered during the year under this Order.

Meat and other Foods.—The usual inspections of meat and of slaughterhouses were carried out under the Public Health (Meat Regulations) Orders, 1924-1935. No legal action was necessary to be taken during the year under Section 117, Public Health Act, 1875.

There are 32 licensed slaughterhouses in the District, and the Sanitary Inspectors made 282 visits to them.

Under the Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933, the Humane Killer is in use in the District (Section 1) and slaughtermen are licensed by the Local Authority (Section 3).

There is no Meat Marking Scheme in force in the District under Part III. of the Regulations of 1924.

The following table summarises the results of meat inspections during the year:—

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known)				Application of the Control of the Co	
Number inspected	241	68	299	1,216	3,356
All diseases except Tuberculosis. Whole carcases condemned		1	4	12	107
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned		2	1	29	303
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis		4.4	1.67	7.4	12.2
Tuberculosis only. Whole carcases condemned Carcases of which some	1.	6			29
part or organ was con- demned Percentage of the number	4	44			149
inspected affected with Tuberculosis	2.08	73.5			5.3

Bakehouses.—There are 21 Bakehouses in the District and 32 inspections were made to them. Seventeen bakehouses now draw their water supply from public mains.

Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.—The County Council undertakes this work. With the exception of samples of milk, no other foods were sent to the County Laboratory for examination during the year.

The administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, and the Factories Act, 1937 (which superseded the Act of 1901 on 1st July, 1938).

1.—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health, including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors:—

		Number of				
Premises.	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)			
Factories with mechanical power Factories without mechanical power †Other Premises under the Act (including works of building and		0 7	0			
engineering construction but not including outworkers' premises)	19	2	0			
TOTAL	56	9	0			

[†] Electrical Stations should be reckoned as factories.

2.—Defects Found.

	Nur	mber of Defe	ects	Number of
Particulars.			to H.M. Inspector.	offences in respect to which Prosecutions were instituted.
Want of cleanliness (S.1) Overcrowding (S. 2) Unreasonable temperature	7 0	7	0	0
(S. 3) Inadequate ventilation	0	0	0	0
(S. 4) Ineffective drainage of	0	0	0	0
floors (S. 6) Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)—	0	0	0	0
Insufficient Unsuitable or defective Not separate for sexes *Other offences	0 2 0 0	0 2 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0
Total	9	9	0	0

^{*} Not including offences relating to Home Work or offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921, and re-enacted in the Third Schedule to the Factories Act, 1937.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious Diseases.

The following table summarises the total number of cases of notifiable diseases occurring within the district, but not including Tuberculosis.

Disease.		No. of Cases Notified.							
		At Ages—Years.							dm. spl.
	At all Ages	0-1	1-5	5-15	15-25	25-45	45-65	65 up	No. adm. to Hospl.
Scarlet Fever Diphtheria Cerebro Spinal Fever Whooping Cough Measles Pneumonia Erysipelas Puerperal Pyrexia Ophthalmia Neonatorum	12 7 1 1 15 14 4 4 2		1 1 4 1 	10 2 1 — 6 4 1 —	1 2 - 2 - 1				971 — 6121
Totals	60	2	8	24	6	12	5	3	27

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1939.

TO THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF	- 12 mg		New Cases.				Deaths.			
Ages in Years.			Resp'tory. Non-F			Resp.	Resp'	tory.	Non-Resp.	
			M.	F.	M.	F.	М.	F.	М.	F.
0 1	•••	• • •				_			-	
1 - 5	• • •	• • •		_			_		-	
5 — 10	• • •				1	1	_	_		- Carriera
10 — 15		• • •				_	_	_		-
15 — 20	• • •	• • •				_		_		-
20 - 25		• • •				-		-		
25 — 35	• • •	• • •	2	1		-	_	1		
35 — 45	•••	•••	1	2		_	1 -	-	_	
45 55			1		_		· 1	2	-	
55 - 65						1	1			1
65 and up		• • •		_			1	-		_
			4	3	1	1	3	3	_	1



